

23, 1959

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Dr. Robert B. Downs, Director
University of Illinois Library
Urbana, Illinois

Dear Bob:

This letter is to serve as an interim summary report on my visit to the CIA library in the interest of the Farmington Plan Committee. A detailed report of this visit together with certain conclusions and recommendations should be ready within a week or so when I will send it first to [redacted] for examination before submitting it to the Farmington Plan Committee. This is necessary to assure correctness of interpretation and to meet the requirements of security for CIA. Immediately after receiving confirmation, with comments or additions from [redacted] the report will be prepared in the copies you require for the Farmington Committee.

Representatives of the library operations of CIA were most gracious and accommodating in giving me a very large part of their time during three and one-half days beginning on September 14 and finishing on September 17. The first day was spent in over-all orientation and discussion of the reference services of CIA, upon which the acquisitions policy is necessarily based. The second day was spent in the area of foreign book procurement where the methods and purposes of the acquisitions program were reviewed in detail. At this point, a closer look was given to the acquisitions from Russia and the Soviet block countries as well as the Far East since these materials are serviced at the acquisitions point mainly because of the linguistic difficulties. On Wednesday, I interviewed Mr. Leo Goodman the State Department head of the operation which includes the foreign acquisitions program in the field. Later, I spent some time with Mr. Evans discussing Washington-wide acquisitions problems and their relationship to the Farmington Plan, and from there went to complete the circle at the Library of Congress Gifts and Exchange Division where Mr. Louis Coffin discussed with me the redistribution of materials received from other federal libraries. On Thursday morning, we held a review session in [redacted] office where we discussed some of the findings, conclusions, and possible recommendations. By this time, we were in general agreement and full understanding of answers to the questions enumerated in your letter of July 7.

Dr. Robert B. Downs

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September 23, 1959

It is my feeling that the experience has been a very fine learning one for me and I greatly appreciate the opportunity to do it. In my discussions with the CIA personnel, I have come away with the general impression that they are a dedicated and extremely able group of people hewing very close to the lines of their mission. Because of this, it may be that the role which they can play in a national program of acquisitions may be relatively small, but in certain highly important areas, their contribution will be considerable. Not wishing to anticipate the details of a full report, I should like at this time primarily to indicate my appreciation for the opportunity to study this library and my gratitude for their forbearance and patience with my numerous questions.

Sincerely yours,


Jerrold Orne

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